

BLOOD

United Blood Services blood drives on Kirtland Air Force Base are:

Sandia Labs, Tuesday, **Dec 21**, 7:30 a.m.- 2 p.m., bloodmobile by Schiff Auditorium

VA Hospital, Tuesday, **Dec 28**, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m., in the Spinal Cord Training Room 1083.

BRIEFINGS

Budgeting 101 is Tuesday, 1:30 p.m., in the Family Support Center. Call 846-0741 to register.

Welcome to New Mexico Tour is

Wednesday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., from the Family Support Center. Visit the Sandia Tram, Cottonwood Mall and Old Town for a great introduction to Albuquerque. Register at 846-0741.

Sponsor Training is **Dec. 28**, 10 a.m., in the Family Support Center. As a sponsor, you are the commander's ambassador for newcomers to Kirtland Air Force Base. Plan to register and be trained four-five months before your new family comes here so you can really help them settle into their new assignment and local community. Call 846-0741 to register.

CLOSING

Carlisle gate outbound lanes are closed **Monday-Thursday through December**. Use the Truman gate as an alternative to exit Kirtland. Inbound lanes are not affected.

HOLIDAY

Holiday greetings to Airmen deployed to Iraq from family and friends can be done online at www.afnews.af.mil/iraq. Click the red box to the right to send a greeting and to read posted messages. Greetings must be no more than 50 words and are free to send.

The 377th Contracting Booster Club offers gift-wrapping through **Wednesday**. E-4 and below get two

gifts wrapped free. Call Elizabeth Sanchez, 853-7505.

Mrs. Santa Claus visits Kirtland Library **Saturday**, 2 p.m., to do story telling and sing-alongs. Admission is free and no reservations are needed.

A toy drive at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center is open **weekdays**, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., in the Benefits and Enrollment office in Building 41, 1D-103. Toys are for children of veterans and visitors at the hospital. For information, call 265-1711, ext. 4522.

The 10th annual Operation We Care food drive for veterans and their families is through **today**.

Nonperishable food items may be taken to Voluntary Service, Building 1, Room 105, at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Food distribution is today.

PERSONNEL

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.

(AFPN) — By January, Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning officials at nearby Gunter Annex will have fully implemented the e-exam computer-based testing program which will provide a variety of military tests using stand-alone or networked computers. The system will ultimately eliminate the time-consuming process of mailing testing material and results between students and test facilities. With e-exam, students receive results of examinations immediately after completing the tests. The program also benefits Airmen who may have ordered testing material shortly before a deployment. Now, more than 70 percent of all Air Force bases are equipped to handle e-exam testing, and more than 1,600 paper tests were converted to e-exams.

The Thrift Savings Plan open season continues through Dec. 31. Open season enrollments or changes made Oct. 15-Dec. 11 were effective Dec. 12 and reflect on Dec. 31 leave and earnings statements. Elections made Dec 12-31 are effective at the beginning of the pay period following the pay

period in which the election was made. Effective with this open season, the maximum employee contribution rates are increasing. FERS employees may contribute 15 percent of basic pay, and CSRS employees may contribute 10 percent. The maximum amount an employee may contribute to TSP in 2005 is \$14,000. Air Force-serviced civilian employees will use the EBIS Web application at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST_GRB/EBIS.htm or the BEST phone automated system at 800-616-3775 to make open season enrollments or changes. For more information on TSP, go the BEST homepage at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil and click on "Thrift Savings Plan" or www.tsp.gov.

Active duty experience is a plus in the Air Force Reserve. Earn retirement credit while enjoying the benefits of being in the military. Build on the knowledge and experience from active duty while contributing to America's defense. Contact Master Sgt. Vera Romano, 846-0544.

ODDS & ENDS

Girl Scouts registration is open for girls 5-17 years. Fee is \$10 and financial assistance is available.

Contact Gracie Gonzalez, membership development director for Girl Scouts of Chaparral Council Inc., at 343-1040 or 800-658-6768. Girl Scouts of Chaparral Council, Inc. serves more than 6,800 girls and 2,500 adults in nine counties in New Mexico and five counties in southwestern Colorado. The council welcomes all girls and adults to join the organization as members or volunteers. To volunteer, join or contribute, call 505-343-1040 or 800-658-6768 Visit the Web site at www.chaparralgirlscouts.org. Self Aid and Buddy Care instructors are needed. If you have supervisor approval, contact Marita Smith at 846-4308.

The Thrift Shop at 4500 Biggs Avenue, operated by the Kirtland Officers Spouses Club is open **Mondays** and **Wednesdays**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., **Thursdays**, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and the **second Saturdays** of the month, 10

a.m.-2 p.m. Consignments are accepted until an hour to closing time. The shop closes Dec. 22-Jan. 3. Call 853-6927.

If you are interested in forming an enlisted spouses club, contact Staff Sgt. Cynthia M. Blackwood at 846-2367.

Air Force birthday commemorative coins are still available for \$4 each. Call 2nd Lt. Marietta Sanders, 853-2650.

Anonymous holiday and "care package" mailings for overseas military personnel are not accepted through Department of Defense agencies since the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001. To participate in supporting military people during the upcoming holidays, visit www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.

The Kirtland Officers' Spouses' Club will be wrapping gifts for donations at the BX through Dec. 24th. The money raised will be given away to many worthy groups and organizations and will help fund the scholarship fund. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Nancy Torres at 331-3418.

VOLUNTEERS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central New Mexico seeks adult volunteers to spend one hour weekly with a children at their schools, working on homework, playing games, reading books and getting to know each other. Call Valerie at 837-9223 or visit www.bbbs-cnm.org.



NAF SALE!

At the Rio Grande Conference Center

Today

**8a.m.-3 p.m. All authorised base personal
(or until sold out)**

**ALL ITEMS SOLD AS IS
NO REFUNDS
CASH OR CHECK ONLY
TWO LIKE ITEMS PER PERSON
Call 846-7420**



Services helps parents meet their mission

Meeting the various needs of working parents is a daily occurrence for the 377th Services Squadron team; finding ways to help them when their children fall ill is usually left to the parents.

Under the umbrella of the Family Child Care Program a special initiative Mildly Ill Care, helps take the pressure off parents.

"It's always tough on parents when they have to make other child care arrangements when their children are ill. It has a direct impact on the mission and can often significantly increase their child care expenses," says Karleen Williams, the Kirtland Air Force Base Family Flight Chief. "Beginning in January, we will be proud to offer care in licensed homes where providers have received specialized training from medical staff, so parents can stay on duty."

Using the specially contracted Air Force licensed or affiliated family child care homes, this program provides care for children ages 12 and under with mild illnesses and conditions that prevent them from using their usual group care. Eligible users are active duty members, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, and DOD civilians assigned to or living on the installation. First priority is given to parents whose children are currently enrolled in the child development, school-age, and family child care programs; however, all

children in the previous categories are eligible to use the program simply by completing an enrollment form obtainable from any of the program locations. For more information and details on the program, please contact the family child care office at 846-1802.

(Courtesy of the 377th Services Squadron)

